

**State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
INFORMATION RESOURCES MANAGEMENT BOARD
Meeting Report**

Date/Place: February 21, 2002/Department of Administration Building, Providence, Rhode Island

Members Present: Howard Boksenbaum, OLIS (Acting Chair); William Fagan, DLT; Michael Hogan, RI House Policy; Nick Leporacci, MHRH; Janet Levesque, RILOCAT; Raymond McKay, City of Warwick; Dexter Merry, Public Telecommunications Authority; Joan Ress Reeves, Library Board of RI; Bruce Reirden, Care New England; A.T. Wall, DOC; Don Wolfe, Member-at-Large

Members Absent: Daniel DaPonte, RI Senate; William Ferland, OHE; Rosemary Booth Gallogly, Budget Office—DOA; Edward Giroux, Secretary of State's Office; James R. Monti, Jr., West Warwick School District; Joseph Pangborn, Department of Elementary & Secondary Education; Christopher Wessells, URI

Other Attendees: Patricia Chorney, Carol Ciotola (recording secretary), and Beth Perry, OLIS; Carrie Gott, New England Interactive (NEI); Thomas Longest, EDS; Gwenn Stearn, Secretary of State's Office

Chair's Report: (1) Mr. Boksenbaum reported that though there has been no formal replacement for Barbara Weaver, Director Carl—Department of Administration, asked him to undertake the responsibilities of the Chief Information Officer that must be maintained. Therefore, he will serve in an Acting capacity.

- Several members asked if plans were underway to fill this position. Mr. Boksenbaum stated that he was not aware of any plans.

Mr. Reirden moved:

THAT THIS BOARD RECOMMEND TO THE GOVERNOR THAT THE STATE INITIATE A PROCESS TO FILL THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER'S POSITION.

Ms. Reeves seconded the motion. Discussion followed.

- Ms. Reeves said the Library Board of Rhode Island is preparing a similar statement to the Governor, since the Chief Information Officer is also the Chief Library Officer. She also felt that leaving this position unfilled would send a message that it was unimportant to have a CIO.
- Mr. Fagan also noted his discomfort at having the CIO's position left vacant.
- Based on the importance of the functions performed by the Chief Information Officer and the new developments in information technology, Mr. Boksenbaum offered to prepare a draft motion for members' review via e-mail that would present the Board's concerns and its request to participate in the recruitment process. This offer was discussed but not acted on.

The motion was unanimously approved.

- (2) Mr. Boksenbaum asked for comment on preparing a Proclamation for Barbara Weaver. Mr. Wolfe moved to:

Direct the Acting Chair to prepare a Proclamation of Congratulations.

Mr. McKay seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Mr. Boksenbaum presented draft language for the Proclamation, and Ms. Reeves moved to:

Amend the motion to include the language presented.

Mr. Reirden seconded this motion, and it was unanimously approved.

(3) Mr. Boksenbaum reported that IT proposals in the past were presented as part of the Annual Budget. Current law requires a breakdown of agency expenditures for IT initiatives. Last year an article was introduced to allow for an ongoing funding stream for IT projects; however, the level of detail requested and amount of agency work that would be necessary led to its demise. This year's budget does not list out IT proposals. Therefore, Mr. Boksenbaum plans to review the Budget, with a budget analysis if possible, to gain a sense of what is included via IT initiatives.

- Mr. Fagan thought it best not to list IT initiatives separately, feeling that IT should be viewed as supporting business actions.
- Mr. Wolfe asked if and how the budget was impacted due to the absence of a Chief Information Officer during the budget's preparation. Mr. Boksenbaum felt it was unprotected. Mr. Wolfe asked if Mr. Boksenbaum felt that the Capital Budget was also unprotected. Mr. Boksenbaum explained that last year's Capital Budget request to address the needs of the state's only data center was funded at a level large enough to hire an architectural engineer to assess the situation. The recommendation was to renovate the current site rather than to relocate it, and \$10 million (over a four-to-five-year period) was allocated to create a state-of-the-art computer center.
- Mr. Merry asked what would happen if the computer center were to fail. Mr. Boksenbaum explained that since this facility houses computers that run state systems such as accounting, payroll, motor vehicles, permitting, etc., Departments would be shut down. This information has been shared with administrative officials, as well as the fact that there is no guarantee that any of these functions would be operating at end of FY 2003 if nothing were done to improve this facility in the near-term. Last year, funds were included in the Governor's Five-year Capital Budget; this year no funds were allocated.
- Since this Board has quasi-fiduciary duties, Mr. Wolfe felt that it would be derelict of its duties not to present the gravity of this situation in written format to the Governor.
- Mr. Boksenbaum cited the next steps in the planning process as presented in the study that was completed last year, offering to provide copies to those interested.
- Noting that the State is at risk and there is a plan of action, Mr. Wolfe emphasized the need to fund it.
- Knowing the condition of the computer center, Mr. Reirden felt it is vital that the Board write to the Governor now to reiterate that the State is at extreme risk and that a disaster recovery plan must be implemented immediately if no money is to be spent upgrading the existing facility.
- Several members asked about the Capital Budget process. Mr. Boksenbaum explained that he and William Ferguson, Division of Central Services, DOA, were involved in the presentation to the Capital Budget Committee.
- Mr. Wall asked the Board to first consider going on record with the State Budget Officer to learn the reason for her deferral of this proposal before sending correspondence to the Governor. If not, the Board would risk making a case for this project in any other arena. Based on the rationale presented for deferment, the Board could then address her reasoning when presenting its position to the Governor. He suggested inviting Ms. Gallogly to meet with a subgroup of this Board to discuss this matter. After offering to participate in this effort, he suggested that Mr. Boksenbaum lead the effort. The Board agreed. Other Board members offering to participate were: Messrs. McKay, Reirden, and Wolfe. Ms. Ciotola will coordinate a meeting in this regard.
- Mr. Hogan reminded members of the time limits involved in the budget process.
- Mr. McKay requested a copy of the Information Technology Office Operations Center report via e-mail. Mr. Boksenbaum will forward the Executive Summary section of this report to the membership via e-mail.

- Mr. Boksenbaum suggested inviting Ms. Gallogly to the next Board meeting to discuss budget cut impacts. Members agreed, and she will be invited in this regard.
- Mr. Fagan noted that RI-SAIL was one of last year's underfunded IT initiatives and asked about its funding status for the coming fiscal year. Mr. Boksenbaum stated that RI-SAIL had basically been level funded—of the \$2 million it was to receive, it will now receive \$1.96 million. Mr. Fagan asked if the funding level would be commensurate with the program's performance. Mr. Boksenbaum thought there would be an increase in performance from the technical side, and asked if members would like to further discuss this project at next month's meeting. If so, he suggested inviting the State Controller to the meeting to provide a status report. Mr. Fagan did not feel a status report from the State Controller would be necessary unless there was significant progress to report on. He then asked if additional licenses would become available, so that more staff could be added to the system. Work done on the prior system conducted by four or five staff is now being conducted by one. This has resulted in an inefficient process, which is prevalent in most state agencies.
- Mr. Reiriden questioned this Board's purpose and asked if it should bring this matter to the attention of the Governor. He felt it a travesty that new technology has been installed, but staff cannot access it. Mr. Boksenbaum replied that the Board's budgetary and staff restraints prevent it from performing oversight duties.

Legislative Committee Report—Mr. Wolfe reported on two bills: (1) Senate Bill 2002-S 2588, an Act Relating to State Affairs—the Electronic Government Services Act and Senate Resolution, which would prevent state agencies from providing electronic commerce services to the public if the private sector provides such services. (2) Senate Bill 2002-S 2544, creating a special senate commission to study electronic recording of real estate instruments. He felt it important to make the IRMB known to this group, and to work with it in order to insure the Board's points are presented.

Portal Review Committee Report—Ms. Gott provided an overview of the portal's progress. It was launched at the beginning of December, and in January the Governor issued a press release that generated substantial interest in the portal. Terming the portal the gateway to government information, she cited various categories, services, etc., and walked members through the portal pages via an Internet presentation. Enhancements were made with respect to the post card feature in response to feedback received. The cards initially offered were limited to Newport sites. Now, a wide variety of cards are offered through the work of Richard Benjamin, a Rhode Island photographer, as well as from pictures offered through the Rhode Island Tourism Council. Enhancements were also made to the look and feel of the portal home page. As always, she encouraged further feedback.

The success of the portal was tracked from its inception (contract signed at end of June 2001) to the first Subcontract signed (end of August 2001). A number of free services are now offered, and work with the Governor's Office was undertaken to create a prototype for the Governor's Website to include a polling site and an events calendar.

- Mr. McKay asked if local communities would be afforded the opportunity to provide services via the portal. Ms. Gott replied that they would and noted that the City of Providence is currently exploring possibilities. At a trade show sponsored by the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, RI.gov partnered with OLIS to present the portal. During that time, she was able to discuss future opportunities with many city/town officials.

Ms. Gott wants to insure that consistency throughout the portal is provided as new interactive services are brought online. Although all users will not approach the Web through this portal, it will serve to create a Web of recognition and an e-government presence over time.

Ms. Gott distributed the handout on DEM and RI.gov Online Boat Registration Renewals—Service, Scope, and Pricing. She reported that the prototype and fee structure had been approved by the Portal Review Committee. Mr. Boksenbaum reiterated the Board's role with respect to portal fees, in that the

contract between the state of Rhode Island and New England Interactive stipulates that all fee decisions need IRMB approval. He then noted that the convenience fee charged for this service is relatively small, stressing that it will be the free services offered that will drive users to the portal.

- Ms. Reeves asked that it be clearly noted on the Web that this is just one way to pay for registration renewals. Ms. Gott said that information to this effect is clearly stated on the documents presented on the Web. Mr. Boksenbaum noted, too, that renewal notices are currently sent through the mail, so the public is aware of other payment options.

Ms. Gott then walked the members through DEM's online payment service process via an Internet demonstration. She emphasized that online payments will eventually save staff time and resources. At that point, state agencies could make paying online more desirable by using funds from the statutory fees collected instead of charging convenience fees. In fact, some states have already adopted this practice. She also explained the difference between interactive services that are complex in nature to develop, as opposed to the free services that can be provided easily.

- Mr. Wall asked if incentives to use online payment services had been developed. Mr. Boksenbaum said they had not, because the market has not yet been developed to that point.
- Mr. Fagan asked if DEM had changed its renewal notice to reference the portal. Mr. Boksenbaum explained that DEM does plan to do so, but did not have the resources to do so this year.
- Ms. Reeves asked whether online services could be discontinued if they do not generate enough revenue to cover costs. Ms. Gott replied that NEI's contract with the State does give NEI the right to discontinue an online service if it ultimately cannot generate the necessary funds.
- Mr. Merry asked about the tax dollars spent to develop this portal. Ms. Gott explained that no tax dollars were used for this portal's development. NEI incurred all costs.

Mr. Wall moved to:

Approve the fee schedule for DEM's online boat registration renewals.

Ms. Reeves seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Next Meeting—Thursday, March 21, 2002, DOA—Conference Room "B" (2d floor)